



USAID | PHILIPPINES
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Office of Program Resources Management

(632) 552-9907

March 17, 2008

“USAID/Philippines does not vouch for the accuracy or the opinions of the articles provided in this press clipping service and assumes no responsibility for their content. Please contact USAID/Philippines at infoph@usaid.gov if you have any questions about USAID programs and projects.”

ECONOMIC GROWTH

(Energy and Environment)

Mindanao coffee growers get expert training

(Source: Philippine Information Agency News Online – 3/17/08)

General Santos City (17 March) -- Coffee has turned out to be one of the country's more viable farm products, and planters in Southern Mindanao are learning the experts' way of growing it.

Nestle Philippines, the country's largest coffee buyer, conducts a Coffee Specialist Training for extension workers from the local governments of Lebak, Kalamansig, and Senator Ninoy Aquino in Sultan Kudarat Province; Maasim and Kiamba in Sarangani Province, and Kidapawan City in North Cotabato from February 25 to March 14, 2008. The trainees will in turn tutor some 15,000 coffee growers in their LGUs and help them improve the quality and market price of their produce. Also participating were coffee traders from Koronadal City, Leyte and Cebu City.

USAID's Philippine Environmental Governance 2 (EcoGov2) Project arranged the Nestle initiative as part of its enterprise development assistance to the LGUs. The 15-day training in Tagum City tackled the development of a coffee-based farming system; and proper coffee growing, harvesting and processing that will ensure quality production of beans.

Domestic demand for coffee beans amounts to 64,000 metric tons valued at P2.5 billion annually, nearly half of which (30,000 MT worth P1.2 B) is imported by the country because of lack of supply.

Looking at this opportunity for gainful rural livelihood, the six LGUs are working on a five-year plan of continuing extension and training programs, with assistance from Nestle and EcoGov2. This should result in improved quality and yields of

coffee beans, and better income for the growers who are now farming an area of over 36,000 hectares.

Nestlé Agri-Services head Zenon Alenton, who was one of the trainers, gave the assurance that the company will buy all their coffee production as long as the quality standards are met. With a strong support system in place, the growers are confident that they can deliver.

The EcoGov Project has been helping the coffee-growing LGUs implement their forest resource management programs, in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. (EcoGov/PIA SarGen) [\[top\]](#)